

REMARKS

The present Amendment amends claims 15-17 and cancels claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14. Therefore, the present application has pending claims 15-17.

Claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11 and 13-17 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by Kitai (U.S. Patent No. 5,948,069). As indicated above, claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 were canceled. Therefore, this rejection with respect to claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 is rendered moot. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It should be noted that the cancellation of claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 was not intended nor should it be considered as an agreement on Applicants part that the features recited in claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 are taught or suggested by any of the references of record. The cancellation of claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 was simply intended to expedite prosecution of the present application. Applicants hereby reserve their right to pursue the invention as set forth in claims 1, 3-8, 10, 11, 13 and 14 in a continuing application.

The above noted rejection with respect to the remaining claims 15-17 is also rendered moot since these claims were amended to include subject matter indicated by the Examiner as being allowable as per paragraph 3 of the Office Action. Particularly, claims 15-17 were amended to be in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Therefore, claims 15-17 are in condition for allowance as per the Examiner's indication in the Office Action.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 15-17 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 15-17 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (520.40601X00).

Respectfully submitted,

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl I. Brundidge', is written over a horizontal line.

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